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# CHAPTER XII

## DIVINATION AND MAGIC

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THIS chapter will furnish a very good example of specialisation of religious and magical functions among the Todas. We shall find that certain Todas have the power of divination, others are sorcerers, and others again have the power of curing disease by means of spells and rites, while all three functions are quite separate from those of the priest or dairyman. The Todas have advanced some way towards specialisation of function in this respect, and have as separate members of the community their prophets, their magicians and their medicine-men in addition to their priests.

### DIVINATION

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Certain men among the Todas are reputed to have special powers as diviners, and are known as *teukdiyel*, "god-gesticulating men," or more commonly as *teuol*. Samuel, my interpreter, always spoke of their performances as devil-dancing and evidently regarded the *teuol* as like those whom he called the devil-dancers of his own people.

In several cases these men are said to have inherited their powers from some near relative, often a grandfather, but it seems that anyone who showed evidence of the necessary powers might become a *teuol*. All but one of the present diviners are Teivaliol, but the divining power is not limited to this division. There is no relation between the various offices of the dairy and the power of divination, and, in

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fact, a diviner necessarily gives up his divining if he becomes a *paiol*.[1]

Each of the *tuval* is believed to be possessed by a special god when he falls into the divining frenzy, and when in this state it is said that the diviner does not, as a rule, speak in his own language, but in some other, most commonly in Malayalam or one of its dialects. The following are those who are at present credited with the power of divination :—

Midjkudr (63) of Piedr, who is inspired by the gods Kulinkars and Petkon. He speaks in Malayalam, and he does not appear to have succeeded anyone else as *tuval*. He is the most successful of those who are at present practising the art, and played the chief part in all the divining which took place during my visit.

Tadrners (60) of Kuudr, inspired by Ethrol and Arivill, succeeded his mother's father, Kasorivan (66) of Kusharf. He is said to speak the language of people whom the Todas call Mondardsetipol living in the Wainad, a language which appears to be a dialect of Malayalam.

Pangudr (66) of Kusharf, also succeeded Kasorivan, his grandfather, and is inspired by Petkon and Meilitars. There was some doubt as to the language used by him.

Ethgudr (52) of Kuudr is inspired by Arivill, and, like Tadrners, speaks the language of the Mondardsetipol.

Terkudr (63) of Piedr, inspired by Teipakh, the river god, succeeded his grandfather Kaltolv. When inspired, his speech is like the babbling of a running river, "like the river's voice," and cannot be understood.

Kangudr (62) of Piedr, who lives at Kavidi in the Wainad, is inspired by Meilitars and speaks Malayalam. He succeeded Tarsvan (62), his father, and Tarsvan had succeeded his father Keithiolv.

Kobur (61) of Kuudr, is inspired by Meilitars and Kuderol and speaks Malayalam.

Pötrners (54) of Kuudr, is inspired by Petkon and speaks the language of the Mondardsetipol.

[1] From the accounts of Pinkin (Appendix I), it would seem that at one time the *paiol* and *tuval* possessed the power of divination.

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Karkievan (63), the *pudol* of the Nòdrs *ti*, was formerly a *kmol*, but gave up divining when he became *pudol*. 191 198

All the above belong to the Teivaliol, and the only Tarthar diviner at the present time is Mongudrvan (13) of Kars. He is said to be inspired by the god of Miuni village, and to speak the Toda language. The village of Miuni belongs to the Teivaliol, so that the only Tarthar diviner is inspired by a god connected with the division to which the majority of the diviners belong. 787 791

Two other Tarthar men, Kerveidi (5) and Tevò (3), both of Nòdrs, are said to have been *kmol* at one time, but they have ceased to divine. They succeeded another man of their clan. Kangudr, who is inspired by Meilitars, has to 'dance' or divine before the Kurumbas, and when he does so he dances as a lame man. This custom is reputed to have come down from the time of Meilitars (see p. 210), who danced as a lame man before the Kurumbas, and promised that whenever he came in the future he would dance to the Kurumbas first and then to the Todas. 177 787 791 198 776

It will be noticed that many of the deities by whom the diviners are inspired are not true Toda gods. Pethon, who inspires Midjkudr, Pangudr, and Pötemers, is said to be a hunting god. According to some he was a son of Teikirzi, but is almost certainly not a true Toda deity.

Arivili inspires Tadrmers and Ethgudr, who are both reputed to speak the language of the Mondarchetipol, and he is probably a god of these people, a tribe of the Wainad. Ethrol, who also inspires Tadrmers, is probably another deity of the same people. I do not know anything about Kudevol, by whom Kolmv is believed to be inspired.

It is noteworthy that the only existing Tarthar *kmol* speaks the Toda language when divining, and is believed to be inspired by a local Toda god; while the diviners belonging to the Teivaliol seem to speak dialects of Malayalam, and many are believed to be inspired by gods who are almost certainly not true Toda deities.

The *kmol* are consulted whenever any misfortune befalls a Toda. The following are various instances in which I have records of resort to divination: sickness or death of a Toda 787 791

787 or of any of his family; sickness or death of a buffalo;
791 failure of milk in a buffalo and persistent kicking of its calf; failure to make a buffalo go to the spot at which it is to be killed during a funeral ceremony; failure of milk to coagulate; burning down of a dairy; disappearance of the bells of a dairy; loss of a *tukittkhan* or lifting stone. In this last instance the stone at the village of Nidrsi was carried away some years ago by a party of English people who came to picnic near the village while the people were away. They carried the stone for some miles and then threw it down. The Nidrsi people could not find it, and consulted Midjkudr and Mongudrvan, who were able to reveal where the stone was to be found, and it was restored to the village, where it can now be seen.

[754] The diviners usually work in pairs, though occasionally it would seem that one only may be consulted. If they are asked for an explanation of some misfortune which has befallen a man, the *tesol* usually find either that the sufferer has committed an offence against the dairy or that he is the subject of spells cast on him by a sorcerer. In the former case, they prescribe the ceremony which must be performed in order to expiate the offence. In the latter case, they name the sorcerer so that the sufferer may know with whom to make his peace.

I have already said that towards the close of my visit a number of misfortunes befell the Todas; one man fell ill, the wife of another died, and the dairy of a third was burnt down, and these events kept the diviners busy, but probably because I was implicated I was not allowed the chance of observing the diviners at work.

787 The only occasion on which I saw the process of divining
791 was at a funeral. The buffalo which was to be killed had
158 been caught at some distance from the place appointed for its slaughter. The animal was unusually refractory and at length lay down and all the natural efforts of the Todas failed to make it move. Midjkudr and Mongudrvan were then called upon to discover the cause of the obstinacy of the buffalo. Mongudrvan first began to dance slowly to and fro, away from and towards the buffalo. He had

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taken off his cloak and was only wearing the *tudrp*. As I already knew the man, I was able to observe that his general appearance was unaltered and that he did not appear to be in any abnormal mental condition. He was soon joined by Midjkudr, who danced up and down much more wildly (Fig. 36). His general appearance was very different to that usually presented by a Toda man. His hair seemed to stand out from his head, although it shook with each of

FIG. 36.—MIDJKUDR AND MONIYAKAN DIVINING AT A FUNERAL.

his violent movements; his eyes were abnormally bright and his face gave every appearance of great mental excitement. I had not previously known the man, but when he came to see me a few days later I could hardly believe that the quiet, self-possessed man whom I saw before me was the same individual whom I had seen dancing at the funeral. It was obvious that he had been in a distinctly abnormal condition of frenzy during the divining process. After dancing for a time Midjkudr began to utter broken sentences in a loud and almost chanting voice, while Mon-

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717 guard remained silent throughout. After Midjkode had
● 711 given these sentences given the reason for the obstinacy of
158 the buffalo, and had prescribed what was to be done, he took a red cloth and dancing more violently than ever waved the cloth before the buffalo and pushed against the body of the animal. Then after the people had dragged the buffalo a little way, it rose and went quietly to the place where it was to be killed.

I had much difficulty in finding out exactly what Midjkode had said. When he came to see me a few days later he stated that he did not know at the time what he was saying, and that his only knowledge was derived from those who had heard him, and I am inclined to believe that he was speaking the truth. His appearance during the divining was remarkably different from that of ordinary days, and strongly suggested a semi-hypnotic state, during which he might well have had no knowledge, or only a very vague knowledge, of anything he said.[1] In his ordinary condition he professed to be ignorant of Malayalam, the language which he was said to use in his frenzied condition.

My ignorance of Malayalam, and the obvious difficulties of the investigation, make me hesitate before expressing any decided opinion as to the real nature of Midjkode's condition when divining, but I have a very strong leaning towards the idea that the man was in a genuinely abnormal condition, allied to the hypnotic state, and I am disposed to accept the statement of the Todas that he was speaking in a language of which he had only a very vague knowledge when in a normal condition. It is, of course, quite possible that the abnormal appearance of Midjkode was merely due to the exercise of dancing and to mental excitement, and that he knew perfectly well what he was doing and saying. I can but record my impression that there was something more, and I only commit myself to this extent in regard to the special occasion on which I saw Midjkode divining; even if I saw a genuine hypnotic or semi-hypnotic phenomenon, it does not follow that all Midjkode's performances are wholly, or even partly,

[1] For an account of what Midjkode seems to have said see the subsequent proceedings, see p. 700

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of this nature, and still less does it follow that the performances of all the *ewol* are of this kind. Nothing struck me more than the contrast between the frenzied condition of Mōlkuḍr and the calm, ordinary demeanour of Mongudrvan, his fellow diviner.

In the case I have described the necessity for the intervention of the diviner arose out of the funeral proceedings, but it appears to be not uncommon for divination to be practised during funerals. Both Mr. Walhouse and Mr. Thurston have seen the process of divining going on at funerals. In Mr. Thurston's case he notes that the diviners talked in Malayalam, and offered an explanation of a gigantic figure which had suddenly appeared and as suddenly disappeared some time previously.

## Sorcery

I met with greater difficulties in discovering the methods of sorcery than in any other branch of my work. It was quite certain that there were men called *pilōṛpōl* (sorcery praying people), or *pilōṛvav*, who had the reputation of possessing magical powers, comprised together under the title *pilōṛvōḍ* or *pilōṛtōṛ*. I was able to obtain the names of these people from several sources, but when I approached any one of them on the subject he professed total ignorance and usually suggested that I should apply to some other man, who, he said, was a real *pilōṛpōl*. Occasionally someone would give me a fragment of information, but would impress on me carefully that he had heard it from somebody else and did not know whether it was true or false.

One or two men, who were certainly not sorcerers, told me that they hoped that I should succeed in finding out the methods and would tell them, for they said that the Todas who had no magical powers were always trying to find out the methods of the sorcerers and were never successful.

I was told by two men that they believed that a sorcerer, by merely thinking of the effect he wished to produce, could produce the effect, and that it was not necessary for him to use any magical formula or practise any special rites.

It was not until my last week on the Nilgiris that I was told of some of the magical rites by Teinnir, who had previously denied all knowledge, though he was said by others to be a sorcerer, and he knew that I was aware of his reputation. He was not a trustworthy informant, but his account was consistent in itself and was in agreement with fragments which I had picked up elsewhere, and I believe it is correct, though I cannot guarantee its accuracy with the same degree of confidence which I feel in regard to most of my information.

The following men were said by various people to be *pálkkwe* :—

Kanen, Kodrieven, and Teikodr (53), Ishkieven (80), Keinkarvi (54), Puthinn (64), and Teinnir (52), among the Teivalioi; Keitan (6), Modrigeidi (1), Kinnerven and Usheidi (14), and Karweidi (8), among the Tertharol. Pushneidi, the elder brother of Keitan, was a noted sorcerer who paid for the belief in his magical powers with his life. It will be noted that magical powers appear to be fairly evenly distributed between the two divisions and do not greatly predominate in one as in the case of divination.

The power of sorcery was said to belong to certain families, and I was told that it was inherited. It seemed probable that a sorcerer only communicated his methods to his sons, and usually only to one of his sons, or if he communicated his knowledge to all, it was often one of them only who obtained the credit for magical powers.

We have already seen that when a man sustains a misfortune of any kind, he consults the diviners, and they find whether the misfortune is due to a fault committed by the sufferer or whether it is the result of sorcery. In the latter case, they say by whose magic the misfortune has been produced, and the sorcerer is then propitiated and removes the spell, the nature and details of the process varying according to the method of sorcery used and the offence which had led the sorcerer to exert his powers. Thus when Firnnen (3) fell ill, he consulted Midjkodr,[1] who said that Kodrieven had bewitched him. Firnnen went to Kodrieven and gave him food, and asked him to remove the spell, and Firnnen became well soon after.

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There are two chief reasons which induce a sorcerer to work his magic on another. One is when a request by the sorcerer for assistance has been met by deception. If the sorcerer asks a rich man for a buffalo, or for money, and the rich man refuses *point-blank*, it does not appear that the sorcerer pro- ceeds further; but if the rich man promises a gift and does not give it, or if he delays giving a positive answer and puts off a decision from day to day, it is a clear case for the application of occult measures. The other chief motive for sorcery is a quarrel with a sorcerer. The methods are different in the two cases. In the first case the sorcerer procures some human hair—it may be the hair of any one, even his own hair. It is not the hair of the man he wishes to injure because it would be impossible to get it. Five small stones are taken and tied together by means of the hair, and both hair and stones are tied up in a piece of cloth. Then, holding the stones and hair in his hand, the sorcerer utters the following incantation:—

*Pithiseen On tathil, Pithiseen Tivishtu tathil; ā tau ani nalkunāsh; thaun gods power if there be;*

*au ulam ulish nalkunāsh; au kav nanāsh pau ani; au ā thayi pāsh his country country if there be; his calf sheep go may; his buffaloes wings grow*

*pāsh ani; nāsh au nāsh ani pash thāsh nāsh au ani; au nāsh au pash fly may; he I water drink as he also water drink may; I thirsty am as*

*thāsh nalkunāsh ani; au ulam pash thāsh ulish ani; au nanāsh he also thirsty be may; I hungry am he also hungry may; my children,*

*tavish pash au nanāsh kāv ani; au nanāsh thāsh pāsh pash au may as his children my may; my wife ragged cloth wear as his*

*nanāsh thāsh pāsh ani.*
*wife ragged cloth wear may.*

This incantation was freely rendered by Tolmir as follows: For the sake of Pithiseen, On, Tathiril, and Tivishti; by the power of the gods if there be power; by the gods' country if there be a country;[1] may his calves perish; as birds fly away may his buffaloes go when the calves come to suck; as I drink water, may he have nothing but water to drink; as I am thirsty, may he also be

[1] I am very doubtful whether the meaning of this and the preceding clause is correctly given in these words.

754 thirsty; as I am hungry, may he also be hungry; as my children cry, so may his children cry; as my wife wears 789 only a ragged cloth, so may his wife wear only a ragged 539 cloth.

791 When he has uttered the incantation, the sorcerer takes the hair and stones in their cloth to the village of the man upon whom he wishes these misfortunes to fall, and hides them secretly in the thatch of the roof of the man's hut.

It seemed that this method of sorcery is only justified when the sorcerer is a poor man, and the references in the incantation to the poverty of the sorcerer confirm this.

[772] When a man who has prevaricated with the request of a sorcerer suffers any evil fortune, he consults the diviners, and they may tell him not only who has produced the misfortune, but why the sorcerer has brought the misfortune upon him and they may advise the sufferer to become reconciled with his enemy and to give him what he has asked. The man goes to the sorcerer, who is usually only too ready to take the credit of the affair, and it is arranged that he shall come to the village of the sufferer. Whenever he comes a third person must be present, who is called the *nadrvol*, or intermediate man.[1] The *nadrvol* brings about the reconciliation, and arranges the terms, and then the sufferer bows down before the sorcerer and performs the *kalmelpudithi* salutation. The sorcerer then utters the following formula while his foot is resting on the head of the man:—

[illegible]
Those gods if there be, his country if there be; cold go away; enemy

[illegible]
become, go away; this buffalo calf to all be well; my mind all

[illegible]
cleansed from gods have I. his mind also clear may.

Teitnir rendered this freely as follows:—

By those gods if there be gods, and by their country if there be a country; as water is cold, so goes my anger; as enemy comes, may my anger go; may his buffaloes and

[1] The middle room of a three-roomed dairy is the [illegible].

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calves be well; I have now nothing evil in my mind, you must also have no evil in your mind. 754

Food is then given to the sorcerer, who also obtains the object for which he had originally asked. Later the sorcerer goes secretly to the hut of the man and takes out the stones and hair which he had hidden in the thatch. 789 539 791

In removing the spell the sorcerer does not mention the names of the four gods, but speaks of them as "those gods." The object of this is that the names of the four gods whom the sorcerer invokes shall not become generally known.

If any one quarrels with a sorcerer, the method adopted by the latter is different. He obtains a bone of a man, buffalo, or some other animal, or if unable to obtain a bone, he may use a lime. He sits, holding the bone or lime in his right hand, and utters the following incantation:—

*Pikisten Ön idith, Tsikirsim Tirsktin idith; a tsu sati ukkuthdr, an nkdr*
*ukkuthdr; auk pudra pirsk pat md; auk ud ulikkdth*
to him will destroy disease come may; to him one incurable
*pan pk md; an kal nuri und; an kai mdri dmd;*
sore come may; his leg broken may be; his hand broken may be;
*an kan pudri dmd; an ars ukrsh an kdlapal dvddink*
his eye destroyed may be; his house into his family to all
*tukkisam pk md; dik auk tukkisam kasvai agi ankn*
trouble come may; be to me troubles did who accordingly to him also
*tukkisam s md; an nkdr ndi ed sriken d*
troubles occur may; his country there is that we shall know those
*kan ndi ed kanken; i elv mals alain*
gods there is that we shall see; this bone into the ground what happens,
*ed ökin ald md.*
that man to also happen may.

The only clause of this incantation of which the meaning is not clear is the penultimate, and the free rendering of this was said to be "as there are undoubtedly gods, we shall see all this happen"; it seems that *sriken*, which means literally "we shall know," is often used in the sense "without doubt." If he is using a lime, the sorcerer substitutes *trsimitch* for *elv* in the last clause.

The bone or lime is then buried in a wood near the village of the man who is to suffer the misfortune.

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754 When the misfortune comes, and the diviners have dis-
789 covered its cause, the matter is arranged by a *nedrvol* as in
539 the other kind of sorcery, and it is usually settled that the
791 sufferer shall give a one- or a two-year-old calf to the sorcerer. When the matter is arranged, the sorcerer visits the village of the bewitched man, who does *kalmelpudithti* to the sorcerer, and the spell is removed with the following words:—

*ten uddsnûdr, an nèdr uddsnûdr; tanod pen mâ*[1]; *term ai pen mâ*[1]; *melk*
son

*madrik an kûdûpel elmk; in mel en mans elm tûlsvinem*
children to his family all to; this after my mind all cleared from guilt

*in ulî agi âmâ; nûv pul, mudri pul pen mâ.*
(as I) this well be may; disease leave, troubles leave go may.

The sorcerer is then given food and goes away with his calf, and later he goes secretly and takes the bone or lime out of the ground.

124 I have already mentioned that these methods of casting and
754 removing spells were obtained with great difficulty and only
578 from one man. This man, Teitnir, was one of the most intelligent of the Todas, but was not a very trustworthy guide. In this case, however, the account he gave was so consistent in itself and with the general character of Toda customs and beliefs that I have no doubt that his methods are those actually in use. It is more than probable, however, that other sorcerers may use other methods, and even that Teitnir's account is not a wholly accurate description of the methods of any one sorcerer. The other Todas had told me that Teitnir was himself a sorcerer, but even after he had given me the above account, he denied that he had himself magical powers, but said that he had learnt the methods from Ishkievan. I had been told of one instance in which Teitnir had practised sorcery on Teikudr (63), but Teitnir gave a different account of this event. Teitnir and Teikudr had quarrelled and in consequence Teitnir had been angry with Teikudr, a condition which the Todas call *murthvichi*. Teitnir belonged to the chief family of the Kuudrol, which is known as the *mani kudupel*; "it is a bad thing for one of so im-

[1] For the meaning of this see above.

766 588 old and had not yet been betrothed, but as soon as she was dead it was arranged that she should marry her *mathkuni*, Keinba (68), a little boy about four years of age, the son of her mother's brother, and this boy occupied a prominent position among those taking part in the funeral rites. Owing to the marriage of the dead child to this boy, the dead child would come to be one of his clan, the Keadrol, and there seemed to be no doubt that, according to strict custom, the funeral should have been held at the funeral place of this clan. Kuriolv, however, arranged that the funeral should take place at Kurkalmut, the funeral place for women of the Kuudrol, but as the girl did not properly belong to this clan the funeral hut was not erected within the circle of stones at this place, but outside it.

The beginning of the funeral ceremonies was delayed for some time because the little boy, Keinba (Fig. 57), had to be taken by his father, Perpakh, in search of the wood and grass out of which to make the bow and arrow to be used in the *pursütpini* ceremony, and they had to go far to find the proper plants for the manufacture of the mimic weapon.

766 787 791 After this delay the ceremonial[1] took its natural course till the buffalo which had been caught by the Taradr men was being taken to the place appointed for its slaughter by the side of the funeral hut. The people had great difficulty in making the buffalo move, and at last it lay down on a boggy piece of ground, and the efforts of all failed to make it go further. The diviners, Midjkudr and Mongudrvan, were then called upon to ascertain the cause of the obstinacy of the buffalo, and then followed the performance which I have already described (see p. 252).

The reasons given by Midjkudr were not very clear, and there seemed to be a good deal of doubt as to what he had really said, but the following appeared to be the chief reasons given:—

The buffalo, Kursi, which had delayed the proceedings, was the property of Kuriolv and was descended from a buffalo which had belonged to Teitchi, Kuriolv's grandfather. Since this buffalo was thus family property, it should go to the sons, and ought not to be killed for a daughter, and especially for

[1] [i.e. funeral rites for a two-year old girl. — Analyst]

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one who now belonged to another clan. Kuriolv ought to have used a buffalo which he had acquired in his own lifetime. Midjkudr went on to say that Kuriolv, having done wrong, must pay compensation to the dead, and told him to give the buffalo named Perov. As a sign that he would do

FIG. 57.—KEINBA AND PERPAKH; THE FORMER IS HOLDING IN HIS HAND THE IMITATION BOW AND ARROW AND HAS HIS CLOAK OVER HIS HEAD.

so, Kuriolv performed the *kalmelpudithti* salutation to Perner, the grandfather of Keinba and also through Sintharap, of the dead girl.

Another reason given was that the buffalo had been caught at the wrong place—viz., at the place where it ought to be

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766 caught at the funeral of a male. I only heard of this reason
787 a few days later, and I do not know whether it was one of
791 the reasons given by Midjkudr or whether it was a later surmise. A third reason was that Perner and Tebner, his brother, had been on bad terms; and to put this right Tebner, the younger, performed the *kalmelpuditkti* salutation to Perner.

766 588 The next special feature of the ceremony took place after the buffalo had been killed and before the *kachütthti* ceremony. Keinba knelt down before Kuriolv and Piliag and the two men touched the head of the boy with their feet, thus accepting him as the husband of Sinerani. Then followed the *pursütpimi* ceremony. The mantle covering the dead child was opened, her right hand unclenched, and Keinba placed the little bow and arrow in the hand, and the fingers of the dead child were closed over the bow so that they held it as they would have done in life. Then the bow was taken out of the hand, placed on the breast of the child, and the mantle was again folded over her. Teitnir, the half-brother of Kuriolv, who had now become the *paiol* of Keinba, came up and covered the head of the boy with his *putkuli* as a sign that he was a widower, and then Teitnir and Keinba put their foreheads together and cried. After crying together for a while, Teitnir touched Keinba's head with his foot. Then Sintharap, the mother of Sinerani, gave grain and jaggery and limes to Keinba, who put them in the pocket of the mantle of the dead child. Sintharap and Keinba then cried together, and Sintharap touched Keinba's head with her foot.

After the cloth-giving ceremony, the body was taken to the burning place, and Keinba mixed honey and grain in a metal bowl; when Keinba began to stir the grain and honey he put his right arm out from above his cloak as usual, but was speedily corrected and made to put out his hand from below the cloak in the manner proper for a widower.

The wrists of the girl were burnt as in the *urvatpimi* ceremony, the burning being done by Silkidz (53), the wife of a younger brother of Perpakh, Keinba's father, and, before her

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776 782 the gods are held to be the source of punishment for sins committed by the Todas, and that they may be appeased by offerings.

776 782 788 Each of the *ti* dairies has connected with it many deities whose names are especially mentioned in the prayers, and it is probable that for infringements of their ritual these gods are the avenging deities.

The attitude towards the gods shown by the formulæ used in the dairy ceremonial has already been considered. Though there is no direct evidence in these formulæ that there is actual supplication to the deities, it is almost certain that this supplication is implied. The formulæ used in other Toda ceremonies have the same general form as those used in the dairy ritual; and here, again, though there is no direct appeal to deities in the words of the formula, such appeal is almost certainly implied. The formulæ of the various ceremonies of the Todas are almost certainly of the nature of prayers in which the gods are asked to give blessings and avert evils. Apart from the formulæ of the definite ritual, there seems to be no doubt that the Todas offer supplications to their gods for help and protection.

754 776 In the formulæ used in Toda sorcery appeal to the gods is even more definite than in the prayers of the dairy ritual. In them the names of four most important gods are mentioned, and it seems quite clear that the sorcerer believes that he is effecting his purpose through the power of the gods.

776 787 791 Another definite way in which the gods of the Todas are believed to intervene in human affairs is in divination. During the frenzy into which the *teuol* or diviners fall they are believed to be inspired by the gods. The diviners are chiefly consulted in the case of misfortune, and they are believed to reveal the reasons for the divine displeasure which has been the cause of the misfortune, and to communicate the ways in which the gods may be appeased. The diviners are believed to be directly inspired by the gods, and their name, *teuol*, or "god men," shows how definitely this belief is present in the Toda mind. In this case each diviner is believed to be inspired by a special deity, though sometimes more than one deity may reveal himself by the same man.

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda



124 Keadr would suggest that this clan was assigned a seat soon
361 after the Teivaliol had crossed the Pakhwar, and that the
621 others journeyed on northwards.

616 The plans certainly make it clear that there is a difference in the geographical distribution of the two divisions, and the nature of this distribution is consistent with the advent of the two divisions at different times. It will be noticed in both plans that one Tarthar clan has its seat in the middle

[101]

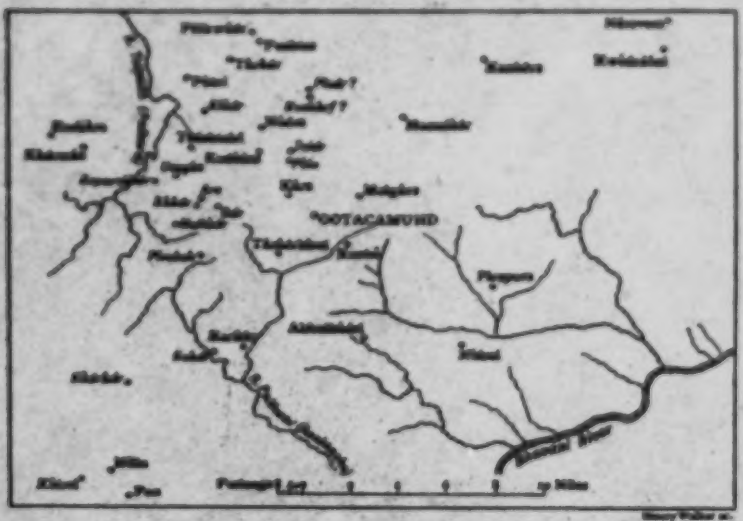


FIG. 74.

of what would otherwise be exclusively a Teivali district. This clan is that of Taradr, and it is perhaps significant that the Taradrol have many features which differentiate them from Tarthar clans in general, especially in their possession of the *kugvalir* and in the possession of their own Amnòdr, though, as we have seen, the latter feature may merely be a later consequence of their isolated position.

184 It is known that when two tribes coalesce to form a com-
616 munity, the inferior people may act as the sorcerers and wizards
● 791 of the community. At the present time the majority of the *tuol*, or diviners, belong to the Teivaliol, but this branch of

1: Rivers E-5 (ca. 1901-02) 1906 Toda



sacred function is not limited to that division. The magical powers of the sorcerer seem to be now almost equally divided among the two divisions, and there is no evidence that magical powers in the past have been attributed to one division more than to the other.

In the preceding pages I have put together the chief evidence which throws any light on the problem raised by the existence of the two divisions of the Toda people. It is far from conclusive, but I incline to the view that the present organisation of the Todas is due to the coalescence of two tribes or castes which came to the hills at different times. It seems probable that the Tartharol arrived first and occupied the hills widely. When later the Teivaliol came, it seems possible that they were placed by the Tartharol in those priestly offices which, though honourable, involved many hardships and restrictions, and were assigned dwelling-places and pastures in a comparatively limited district of the hills.

The analysis of the genealogical record has brought out some interesting differences between the two divisions. The data compiled from the genealogical tables by Mr. Punnett[1] would seem to show that the preponderance of males was and is still greater among the Teivaliol than among the Tartharol. The tables provide statistics roughly for four generations. In the second of these,[2] the number of males for every hundred females was 159·7 among the Tartharol, 259 among the Teivaliol. For the last generation, these numbers have sunk to 129·2 and 171 respectively. These figures almost certainly mean that female infanticide was more in vogue among the Teivaliol and is still practised by them to a greater extent than by the Tartharol.

This would seem to show that the Teivaliol have clung more closely to the old custom of infanticide and may be taken as an indication of the greater conservativeness of the priestly caste, but the Teivaliol chiefly occupy those parts of the hills furthest removed from the European settlements,

[1] *Proc. Camb. Philos. Soc.*, 1904, vol. xii, p. 481.

[2] I neglect the first generation on account of the small number of families for which there are data.

10:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
AW60 Toda AW60



Most of the deities who are named and of whom stories are told are the tödʉ̈ṯ and it is about these that Rivers acquired much information. They are "the mountains (tʉ̈ṯ) which are gods (töu)," and with them we may include the river deities. They are very real to the Todas; for details I refer to Rivers, since little that is new on these gods has come to me. But they are not the gods of the sibs. They have connexions with the villages of the sibs (the villages are called *mod*, Englished as "mund"), e. g. tökiṯ created most of the Toda institutions at the mund noːṛ and this connexion is kept very much in mind. They may also be offended against, and diviners may and do sometimes say that such and such misfortunes have come to a man because he has so offended, especially against the river gods by breaking the regulations concerning the crossing of rivers. But these tödʉ̈ṯ are not the most important gods to the Todas.

The töunoːṛ are by all odds the most present divinities in Toda consciousness. These are the gods of the munds, or rather of the dairy-complexes localised at munds. Most munds consist of one or more dairies, buffalo-pens, and other appurtenances of the dairy-cult, together with several houses in which the people live. The dairy section of the mund is the töunoːṛ and it is clear from the song-phraseology and the prayers that it is not only the dairies that are denoted by this term, but the whole dairy-complex associated with the dairies. The prayers are made up of names of everything connected with the complex, dairies, sacred buffaloes, pens, calf-sheds, bells, utensils and tools used in the dairies, and coagulant. The dairyman in that he is the servant of the complex is to this extent connected with it. The complex may suffer pollution in any of its parts, and for this reason women, who are the chief source of pollution, are rigorously separated from the complex and not allowed to approach it from the house across a line that is marked by a stone or stones. The houses in fact are designated as aːṛ as opposed to the dairy section of the mund which is noːṛ "sacred place." Within the noːṛ it cannot be discovered that any element is the local seat of the divinity. The linguistic evidence shows that the noːṛ itself is the god. Both songs and ordinary speech refer to the sacred part of the mund as töu "god" or noːṛ "sacred place" or töunoːṛ, a compound of the two words denoting "the sacred place which

*Toda culture thirty-five years after* 1115 799 134 77 78

The dwelling houses form no part of the complex, and so there are tŏunoṛ without houses, as is preeminently the case with the highest grade of dairies, the ti[illegible]. There may also be munds without dairies, and these are not tŏunoṛ. Some munds also which have dairies are not tŏunoṛ. They were founded in comparatively recent times because the herds tended at a tŏunoṛ became too large and new dairy accommodation had to be built. Their comparative lack of sanctity is indicated by the fragmentary nature of the prayers used at them and by the fact that a dairyman-priest may not be ordained for them but must be ordained for one of the tŏunoṛ of the sib and after serving there for a short time must go on to the less sacred place. This type of mund as well as those without dairies are known as maxmoḍ, as opposed to the tŏunoṛ, which are mtumḍmoḍ "important or chief mund." In each case a tŏunoṛ is said to have been founded in the beginning by the tŏuθuṭ associated with the sib, a maxmoḍ to have been a human creation. [347] [178] [193]

When a tŏunoṛ is entirely abandoned and its dairy no longer used, the Todas may revive it after a period of as long as fifty years or even longer. This usually happens because the diviners so order it when misfortune has overtaken the sib or because a buffalo wanders to the abandoned site and the diviners interpret its actions as directed by the tŏunoṛ who wishes the people to cease their neglect. The Todas in their religious thinking have not found it necessary to speculate about the fate of a tŏunoṛ when a mund is never revived. Nor are they troubled by the question of the relationship between the sacred buffaloes of a sib and the various dairy-complexes at which they are tended. Each sib operates a number of complexes and the same buffaloes may be kept at any of them in turn. [191] [614]

When Rivers said that each sib has a "ruling deity," he referred to the tŏuθuṭ. The Toda phrase which he gave, nŏdrodehi, i. e. noṛoḍoḍi-, means "(the deity, i. e. the tŏuθuṭ) ruled, or owned, the sacred place," or as one informant translated "used the mund." For each "chief mund" (mtumḍmoḍ or tŏunoṛ) was created, as we have said, by a tŏuθuṭ who founded the dairy operations there and carried them on in the beginning. [614]

10:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
AW60 Toda AW60



of the oldest men in the tribe and now dead; see *Toda Garments and Embroidery*, note 2) when theology was once being discussed in my presence. This belief has no influence on the formulas of Toda ritual and is clearly quite extraneous to the proper cult. It is undoubtedly a borrowing from other Hindu communities, as is the frequent use of the vocative *sornō* as an expletive of surprise and wonder. Christian missionary teaching seems to have had no influence at all on Toda belief and practices.

It is of some interest to enquire why the Todas have not set up in their villages shrines of Hindu deities. It might seem that the nature of the *mundu*, explained above, consisting of a sacred part which is itself a god and a profane part where carriers of pollution, especially women, live, would preclude the admission of a Hindu deity. Such an argument however is quite irrelevant, and would undoubtedly have no weight if the occasion ever arose when the need of setting up a shrine was felt. In general, such shrines or temples are not set up in South India at random. A Hindu god in the mind of rustic and unlettered communities is definitely associated with the spot where his temple is, and will move to another spot only if he so wills it and makes known his will through a diviner or other person who is possessed of this god. This was the case when the Kotas of one of the villages some years ago at a time of epidemic brought to their village a new trinity of gods, who are said to have come from Karaimadai in the plains. These new gods spoke through a man who is now one of the official diviners of this trinity. He had not before been a diviner. It can hardly be doubted that discussion had previously taken place about the efficacy of the old polyandrous trinity of the village and that the general tension of feeling consequent on the epidemic helped to bring about the possession of the man by the new gods. Incidentally, the presence in this village of two trinities with attributes and ceremonies of the same order has caused an immense amount of friction within the community. The Todas also have their diviners and it is quite conceivable that they should at some time produce utterances with the same purport as those of the above-mentioned Kota. This has not happened so far, and it may be that the present pattern of their utterances makes it improbable that they

19:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1937) 1938
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will order the setting up in the mands of Hindu shrines. They now at times of misfortune order propitiation of the tribal gods or the making of vows to temples already established and well known to the Todas. The two outlets are probably sufficient for all Toda needs, though the Kotas, who had much the same two outlets, worship at their own temples and occasional making of vows to Hindu temples, seems to have found them insufficient in a time of stress.

A puzzling point in Toda religion is the calf-sacrifice ( Rivers pp. 274-290 ). Rivers had difficulty in learning anything about it, and I have encountered equal difficulty. I finally succeeded in having a sham performance put on for me in great secrecy. The chief of the two performers said that he had never been present at a sacrifice of this kind, while the other had assisted at the sacrifice at one of the most sacred dairies, the ti:-dairies: the former man also asserted that the calf-sacrifice is extremely rare except at ti:-dairies. Other informants however have stated that it takes place frequently at the munds as well as at the ti:-dairies. My chief informant was probably concealing the truth. One reason why this was so was accidentally dropped by him, that the Todas are ashamed to have it known that they eat meat at this sacrifice. This type of purity as a mark of high caste, if it was not known to the Todas from the beginning of their occupation of the Nilgiris, has perhaps been preached to them by Hindu missionaries or may perhaps have become known to them quite casually from contact with plains Hindus. It seems unlikely however that this is all that is behind the secrecy surrounding the subject, but more information is not to be had. The same secrecy has undoubtedly falsified my records of the songs in several places. The sacrifice should be mentioned in several different contexts, as I discovered late in my field-work. Substitutions of innocuous phrases were made until one of my informants through familiarity became careless and used the proper phrase. I was able in later dictations to prompt the informants, to their slight surprise and discomfort, and to record both the reference to the sacrifice and the attempted substitution.

It will be seen from the preceding discussion that changes in Toda culture due to outside influences have been extremely slight. In religion no changes since Rivers' time are known;

12:Emeneau L-S (1935-1938)1941 AW60 Toda AW60



174 speak a Dravidian language, closely allied with Kannada and Tamil, and more closely, as I
64 judge provisionally, with Kannada, it seems profitable to look to a generalized South Indian
[197] background as a basis for the highly specialized and aberrant Toda culture forms. We find at once that the generalized South Indian culture background includes exogamous patrilineal sibs with marriage forbidden also within the matrilineal line to degrees that vary from community to community.[36] There is no record of fully developed exogamous matrilineal sibs in the large area until we reach the Malabar region on the southwest coast of India. There we find in some caste-communities matrilineal descent to the exclusion of patrilineal. Rivers
[114] was inclined on a number of grounds to uphold the hypothesis that the Todas in very early times migrated to the Nilgiris from Malabar.[37] Practically all of his pieces of evidence prove invalid.

197 It was a wild guess that the Toda language is closely related to Malayalam, and the fact
174 that some of the diviners of the Todas undoubtedly do speak a very fragmentary Malayalam
79 during their performances is irrelevant. The diviners speak the language of the god by whom
[787] they are possessed; the god who inspires most of the Toda diviners has his temple in the Wynaad among a Malayalam-speaking population. It was suggested[38] that the model house or dairy used in the ur-fört ceremony, and called pœd-pœ (Rivers' pālpali), has some connection with the tamarind juice used in a Nair ceremony. Linguistically this is impossible; the Toda word for tamarind (pyl) has no possible connection.

174 Toda polyandry was connected with the various types of polyandry formerly, and in
595 some castes still, practised in Malabar. Much more investigation is needed in Malabar be-
[114] fore comparison can be made safely between the institutions. It has been the experience of ethnologists in India that no summary accounts of communities hitherto published can be trusted. Even the best of them, such as the various *Castes and Tribes* volumes, are highly untrustworthy. Since in Malabar, polyandry is combined with matrilineal descent, the situation is undoubtedly oriented differently from that of the Todas, and a study of the total configuration in Malabar castes should be made before comparisons are entered upon. Fur-
[171] thermore, Toda polyandry needs to be reexamined in the light of the fact that the Kotas of the Nilgiris have been found to practise a special type of fraternal polyandry.[39]

174 The tɔɪ(ɪ)ɔj or "lover-mistress" institution (Rivers' mokhthoditi) is on the whole so
837 unlike the marriages between the younger sons of Nambutiri Brahmans and Nair women that use of the superficial and strained resemblance is highly unprofitable.

[36] I base this statement partly on the literature (not all the pertinent facts are to be found there), partly on my own investigations (which were thorough among the Coorgs, an account of whose regulations will be found in my paper *Kinship and Marriage among the Coorgs* [Journal, Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, Letters, Vol. 4, pp. 123-47, 1938]; sketchy enquiries were made on several other communities). The point, I think, is of more fundamental importance for the understanding of South Indian ethnology than that about cross-cousin
[114] marriage, which Rivers treated in *The Marriage of Cousins in India* (Journal, Royal Asiatic Society, pp. 611-40, 1907). [37] Pp. 693-718, especially pp. 698 ff. [38] Rivers, p. 702.

[39] D. G. Mandelbaum, *Polyandry in Kota Society* (American Anthropologist, Vol. 40, pp. 171-83, 1938).